



Kearns High School

"Where destiny is a matter of choice, not chance."

School Community Council Meeting Notes

Tuesday, April 11th, 2023

Parent Members Present: Amy McLaughlin, Cody Hancuff

Staff Members Present: Danny Stirland, Aimee Duran, Cheri Jacobson

Visitors Present:

Amy McLaughlin welcomed everyone at 4:36

Amy made a motion to approve last month's minutes. Cody Hancuff seconded the motion and all were in favor.

Mr. Stirland wanted to get some insight from parents on the cell phone issues we have been facing. This discussion ties into the Land Trust plan as our major focus is on higher scores and higher levels of engagement in the classroom. We don't have a lot of control or repercussions when it comes to attendance. One of the best ways to get them here is to make our classes more engaging and relevant. We do have certain teachers with higher attendance rates. When you ask the kids they say it is because they have fun and they like it because they are more active in the class. Cell phones are a major barrier to keeping them engaged. We do not have a school wide policy. There is a district policy that states the teacher can take the phone and the parent has to pick it up from the office. Many of our teachers have started using cell phone pockets. The students put them in there at the beginning of class to remove the temptation as they seem addicted to checking their phones continuously. We feel like this policy would be used consistently by teachers if it was school wide. This has upset a few of our parents because they believe they cannot get ahold of their students if we take the phone away.

We face two major challenges - teacher consistency and parent agreement.

Amy McLaughlin stated that they are facing the same issues in her workplace - both phones and dress code. She really likes the pocket idea. She also feels like parents should not be contacting students during class time.

Danny Stirland also stated that any parent can get ahold of a student if there was an emergency by contacting the office.

Cody Hancuff thinks the pouches are a good idea and said that the seminary teachers would support the program as well. He does not feel like most of the students know how to use them responsibly. He wonders if there could be some sort of incentive tied to it as well.

Cheri Jacobson mentioned that many allow them to have them at the end of class as a reward for leaving them alone. Danny Stirland also mentioned that Misty Morrow started this expectation at the beginning of the year and the students know what to do. She does allow them a break in the middle of class to check their phones and then they get back to learning.

We do have some teachers who don't model responsible use. They are on their own phones during class time as well. This will need to be enforced and practiced by all teachers.

Danny Stirland discussed how successful Cyprus High School was with this program. It took them a while to get full adoption, but it worked. One of the concerns is the confrontation that will arise if a student refuses. This will be an issue for administrators to deal with, not the teachers. He feels like if the parents saw just how much the phones are out during class they would understand and support the decision. This will not solve all the problems, but it will help.

Cody Hancuff wondered if some teachers would be resistant as they would have to be highly engaging all the time. Danny Stirland hopes not. There are always other devices that kids and teachers can turn to. like Chromebooks, but we have been focused on engagement as a staff all year.

Callie Campbell , a first year teacher at KHS, has had a lot of success with the pockets in her classroom. It is just an expectation that was set from the beginning of the year. The kids just do it now - it is possible.

Cheri Jacobson reiterated that the teachers need to do it as well - they cannot be hypocritical.

Danny Stirland said we will need to work on the next steps. It will be presented to the Leadership Committee - most are on board already - and we hope to have it in the school plan for next year. We have a lot of kids - 2,400 - so there will be some struggles.

Cheri Jacobson commented that we have good kids, they just need structure and guidance.

Will the district back us up? They have backed Cyprus for the last three years. If the phones are taken away, the admin will pick them up and the parents will have to pick them up from the office. Parents don't like that and it may help them put the pressure on the students.

Amy McLaughlin suggested that if any kids get caught with phones the class loses the extra time at the end with them. This may put some peer pressure on them.

The meeting was adjourned at 5:15.

Next meeting will be held on Tuesday, May 11th.